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ABSTRACT

This paper examines Saint Augustine's obscurantist preferences in popular preaching (as distinguished from his episcopal instructions to other clergy) as a way of identifying one of the classical influences on Christian rhetorical strategy. The first section of the paper offers a comparison of Augustine's theoretical approval of homiletic obscurantism with allied classical perspectives by outlining the summary of classical obscurantist theory provided by three Hellenistic rhetoricians and by surveying Augustinian tracts intimately related to his rhetorical theory. The second section illustrates classically approved methods of obscurantist diction, composition, and brevity in Augustine's homiletic models for the major liturgical feasts of Western Christianity. The conclusion of the paper addresses the critical advantages of recognizing an obscurantist "compromise" in early Christian rhetoric. (FL)

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THE OBSCURANTIST DESIGN IN SAINT AUGUSTINE'S RHETORIC

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THE OBSCURANTIST DESIGN IN SAINT AUGUSTINE'S RHETORIC

Rhetorical theory and practice in the ancient world embraced principles supporting both directness and subtlety in speech composition. The stylistic "virtue" of aptness tended to mediate the seeming conflict between other virtues of clarity and elaboration, and to confirm a blend of expository and obscurantist rhetoric. The classical mind's liberality--as illustrated by classical allowances for rhetorical obscurantism--poses a particularly knotty problem in assessing homiletic development during the fourth-century debate over the Christianization of pagan rhetoric. How could Christian exemplars of a classically liberal education, for example, advocate intentionally obscure style in expressing Christian dogma? More specifically, an accurate assessment of Saint Augustine's place in the history of rhetoric should include appraisal of his stance on the utility of obscurantism in Christian preaching.

Classical perspectives on obscurantism stressed a rational, situationally determined opposition to simplistic notions of clarity. Augustine's homiletic perspectives included a rationale for Christian obscurantism as a protective device for the body of faith. Augustine also argued for adjustments in the simple clarity of doctrinal exposition based on needs presented by the audience and situation. Augustine carefully planned each of his sermons and postponed sermonizing if he had not "thought it out beforehand" (sermo 225.1). Given his extensive training and conscious preparation, the accidental occurrence of classically approved methods for obscuring rhetoric seems unlikely. Augustine designed his popular sermons for the transmission of relatively small bits of dogma at any one time. The unlearned majority of his congregations were exposed to restricted expositions of doctrine which the Bishop of Hippo could repeat and illustrate thoroughly. The relative complexity of Augustine's rhetoric insured exhaustive explanations of the faith while retaining the interest and admiration of more sophisticated listeners who would appreciate Augustine's display of elegant style. The correlation of his models for

Christian preaching with classical pagan rhetoric, even with such a compromising principle as obscurantism, does not derogate Augustine's accomplishments. Rather, the comparison is flattering and places Augustine's homiletic feats in a context of the most highly erudite perspectives on public communication available at the time.

This essay examines Augustine's obscurantist preferences in popular preaching (as distinguished from his episcopal instructions to other clergy) toward specifying one of the classical influences on Christian rhetorical strategy. In Section I, the essay compares Augustine's theoretical approval of homiletic obscurantism with allied classical perspectives by (a) outlining the summary of classical obscurantist theory provided by three Hellenistic rhetoricians, and (b) surveying Augustinian tracts intimately related to his rhetorical theory. In Section II, the essay then illustrates classically approved methods of obscurantist diction, composition, and brevity in Augustine's homiletic models for the major liturgical feasts of Western Christianity. The Conclusion addresses the critical advantages of recognizing an obscurantist "compromise" in early Christian rhetoric.

I. Obscurantist Theory

An examination of Augustine's theoretical regard for obscurantism necessarily begins with his recognition of the "very great fecundity" in scriptural obscurity: the fertility of these texts could be appreciated only with "useful and healthy labor."[1] Most of the labor involved accurate analysis and understanding of the verbal signs in scriptural language.[2] Because ancient Eucharistic celebrations for catechumens (adult students of Christianity) ended with the homily (an explanation of the liturgical readings from scripture), the preacher's transmission of biblical Truth represented a vital and difficult task. The neo-Platonic psychology of Plotinus (A.D. 205-269/70), in which Augustine found encouragement for "the connection between the visible and the unvisible, between an inexpressible inner world and its meaningful articulation in the outside world,"[3] enhanced Augustine's regard

for obscurantism: "[W]hat Plotinus had struggled to convey to a select classroom in Rome, the Christians of Hippo and Carthage could hear any Sunday in the sermons of Augustine."[4]

Augustine's obscurantism drew nourishment from his extensive training in rhetoric. In Books Two through Five of his Confessions, Augustine related his liberal arts education at Tagaste, Madaura, and Carthage. He also related his professional accomplishments as a reader of rhetoric at Carthage, Rome, and Milan. Augustine turned to Christianity in 386 and devoted his professional skills to a Church confronting theological attacks from Manichaeans, Pelagians, Priscillianists, and Donatists. Since heretics often applied strictly logical arguments to the rejection of Christian dogma, many churchmen considered resorting to a narrow fideism and rejecting any finely polished intellectualism altogether in fending off the heretical assaults. Jerome's sentiment that "it is better to have a just unlearnedness than an evil wisdom" summarized the most conservative Christian viewpoint, even though Jerome himself seemed to feel more ambivalently toward the issue.[5] Far from rejecting sophisticated rhetoric and pagan traditions of learning outright--a caution evident in his tactful avoidance of "scornful invective" while debating Porphyry's tract Against the Christians[6] --Augustine rejected apologetics which did not blend Christian faith and pagan learning. Outler paraphrases Augustine's favored maxim, credo ut intelligam ("I believe to understand") "If faith is primary, then the quest for understanding becomes a legitimate enterprise. . . . Thus, pagan literature, philosophy, and history can be transvalued and conserved, provided only that they abandon every claim to ultimacy."[7]

Augustine transvalued and conserved pagan norms of rhetoric which had been canonized in Roman rhetorical education since the second-century reigns of Hadrian and the Antonine emperors. The rhetorical commentaries of three Greek critics, Demetrius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Longinus, summarized several centuries

of developments in stylistic norms.[8] The consensus of the three critics--expressed by Dionysius in On Literary Composition. On Lysias, On Demosthenes, On Thucydides, Letter to Pompeius, and Second Letter to Ammaeus, and by Longinus in On the Sublime--presumed the rational and emotional utility of obscurantist rhetoric especially when applied to four situations commonly recognized by rhetoricians from Aristotle to Quintilian: (a) obscurity may be needed to gain the audience's admiration for one's style; (b) obscurity may compensate for flaws in the content of one's message; (c) obscurity may minimize serious mistakes in adapting to specific audiences; (d) obscurity may elicit an audience's sympathy by affecting emotion.[9]

Throughout his ministry Augustine composed several tracts which together illuminate the Bishop of Hippo's perspective on obscurantism in teaching and preaching: De magistro (c. 389),[10] De libero arbitrio (completed by 395),[11] De catechizandis rudibus (c. 400),[12] De trinitate (c. 419),[13] and De doctrina christiana (completed by 427).[14] Augustine viewed rhetorical obscurantism as inevitable as well as rationally and emotionally useful. Since 'human speech is confined within.. . . narrow limits when we wish to express the ineffable' (Trin. 7. 1. 2), less than exact words occasionally become useful so that men "may speak in some way about that which we cannot fully express in any way" (Trin. 7. 4. 7). 'Those who go astray in the investigation" of profound truths must be forgiven (Trin. 2. preface), especially because 'words merely stimulate a man to learn' rather than fully revealing truths (Mag. 14. 46). Augustine also perceived divine approval of rhetorical models in 'obscure and difficult' scriptural texts (Trin. 15. 9. 16); such rhetoric offered "enticements, as it were, for children' (Trin. 1. 1. 2). Scriptural style suggested a general precept to Augustine: 'I am convinced that this entire matter was ordained by God to reduce men's pride through work and to humble our own minds which usually disdain that which they have learned easily" (Doct. Christ. 2. 6). Augustine founded the precept both on his theory of signs--[T]he more a thing is

known, but not fully known, the more the mind desires to know the rest" (Trin. 10. 1. 2)--and on his concept of free will--"[S]o long as a man prefers to pursue whatever is easier for his weakened condition to endure, the more he is encompassed in darkness" (Lib. Arb. 2. 16. 43). Often repeating St. Paul's sentiment in his First Letter to the Corinthians that 'I see now through a mirror in an obscure manner,' Augustine emphasized that revelations and beliefs were at least partially efficacious because the reasons behind them were "hidden" (Doct. Christ. 2 2. 7; Lib. Arb. 1. 2. 5). The obscurantism of biblical authors, for example, executed a divine plan "to benefit our intellects" and to "lead us from this wicked world to a holy one" (Doct. Christ. 4.6).

Augustine recognized an immediate homiletic advantage in Christian obscurantism related to apologetics. As demonstrated in his use of "obscurity" to repel heretics' 'sophistry" (Trin. 5. 6. 7), Augustine suggested that rhetorical form might partially conceal the preacher's message for purposes of doctrinal preservation and protection. Augustine expounded at length the perversity of 'flesh' (Doct. Christ. 1. passim). He explained with equal care that his chief aim in writing on catechetics was "to bring it about that one may take pleasure in catechizing" (Catech. Rud. 2. 4). Preaching, after all, seeks to accomodate "ears of flesh" and, although the preacher attaches sounds to his thoughts in order to penetrate men's ears, the 'thought is not changed to the same sound" and "does not suffer any deterioration" (Doct. Christ. 1. 13). Rhetorical obscurantism, a pagan device, preserves and protects doctrine while still appealing to perversely human ears. The preacher may justifiably render truth more discernible, though not any clearer (Trin. 11. 1. 1), by casting his words 'in the usual way of things that confront our gaze" (Lib. Arb. 2. 11. 30). Augustine compared the protective arts of preachers with those of physicians, indicating that the rhetorical form a preacher

gives to truth compares favorably with the "beauty" which may accompany "the utility" of a skillfully applied bandage (Doct. Christ. 1. 14).

Augustine specified several reasons for obscurantism which relate closely to the classical consensus on apt situations for such rhetoric.

(a) The ancients felt that obscurantist devices might elicit admiration for one's style. Augustine preached in an extemporaneous manner and consciously used stylistic devices "to delight the ear of an illiterate audience."[15] Augustine considered that points of doctrine might give pleasure if the preacher concentrated "on the manner in which they are treated" (Doct. Christ. 4. 10). Analyzing obscurantism in biblical prophecies, Augustine concluded that the more points of doctrine could be concealed stylistically then "the more delightful they become when explained" (Doct. Christ. 4. 7). Admirable style did not require formal recognition by the unlearned audience of the preacher's carefully planned devices, however: such recognition would be "very difficult and quite unusual" (Trin. 15. 9. 15).

(b) The ancients agreed that obscurity might compensate for deficiencies in the content of messages. Augustine preached to citizens of a sophisticated empire "to which Christianity was peripheral": "Among such men, the all-demanding message of Augustine merely suffered the fate of a river flowing into a complex system of irrigation."[16] Augustine keenly perceived the potential deficiencies in homiletic instructions--"that they merely intimate that we should look for realities" (Mag. 11. 36)--but stressed that men should "rejoice" if they but apprehend truth "in part, or through a mirror, or in an obscure manner" (Trin. 6. 10. 12). Augustine argued that the preacher's use of obscurantist devices would "sharpen the desire for truth" (Catech. Rud. 9. 13), as well as "exercise and . . . polish" the mind (Doct. Christ. 4. 8).

(c) Classical theorists observed that obscurity was useful for avoiding mistakes in addressing a specific audience. The Bishop of Hippo's "enormous power"

over congregations, "to provoke them to identify themselves completely with himself," rested on his success at intimately understanding the audiences who stood nearby his cathedral throne.[17] Stylistic adaptation to differing audiences took precedence in Christian instruction: "It is useful if many men, differing in style but not in faith, write many books even on the same topics, in order that the subject itself may reach as many people as possible, to some in one way, to others in a different way" (Trin. 1. 3. 5). Augustine believed that obscurantist devices might "shake off the torpor" of certain audiences (Catech. Rud. 9. 13). In addition, well-planned obfuscation could "spur on the zeal" of the faithful while it could "conceal the meaning" from wicked auditors who rightly should be excluded from religious initiation (Doct. Christ. 4. 8).

(d) The ancients agreed that obscurity could be especially helpful in eliciting the sympathy of audiences. Augustine explained scripture to African audiences who shared, in general, "a Baroque love of subtlety" and, in particular, "his own excitement at unravelling a difficult text."[18] Christian obscurantism included tactical devices "to break down aversions" to the gospel (Doct. Christ. 4. 8) and Augustine commended those exegetes who used "a style of more sonorous and neatly-turned expression" to gain a sympathetic hearing for Christian dogma (Catech. Rud. 8. 12). In the best Christian instruction, "the suggestive force of the speaker's words" invited a sympathetic, participatory response from the listener (Mag. 14. 45).

II. Obscurantist Practice

Augustine allied himself theoretically with the classical tradition of rationally planned, situationally determined obscurity by defending such rhetoric on the grounds of divine approval, scriptural models, and salutary effects on Christian instruction. Augustine's homiletic practice, in which he typically

explained "the theological, philosophical, philological, historical, and sociological implications of the subject in hand," included a necessary "blurring of the logical sequence of thought."[19] Augustine executed his episcopal privilege of preaching frequently, often delivering two or more sermons on a single day.[20] Sermons on the liturgical seasons comprised one major division of Augustine's preaching, which also included sermons on the scriptures, on the saints, and on selected dogmatic and moral questions. For the purposes of this essay, Augustine's preaching on the Western Church's major celebrations of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost illustrates the uniquely precise directions on obscurantist diction, composition, and brevity contributed by Demetrius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Longinus.[21]

Diction

The Greek critics prescribed diction that indicated a rhetor's desire for the unusual distinction produced by using tropes such as metonymy and periphrasis, metaphor and allegory. The use of metonymy (an interchange of synonyms) and periphrasis (a substitution of phrases for single words) amplified one's diction beyond common standards of simplicity. The use of metaphor and allegory dignified one's expression, while often allowing for greater accuracy than did merely "plain" diction.

Augustine stressed the preacher's need for the type of amplification and repetition secured through through the use of metynomy and periphrasis. "A manifold diversity of expression" is required to secure understanding (Doct. Christ. 4. 10). The teachings of heretics can be refuted more easily in proportion to "the more outlets that are open for avoiding their snares" (Trin. 1. 12. 31). Catechetical duties especially demand that the speaker "dwell" on important points (Catech. Rud. 3. 5); in the case of "slower minds," the preacher must employ a greater number of

illustrative words (Catech. Rud. 9. 13). Augustine also believed that "only hidden meanings, rare and difficult words, and elaborate circumlocutions" could prevent more highly cultured audiences from losing interest in religious speechmaking.[22]

Augustine made typical use of metonymy in dwelling on the "gift" of Christ's nativity as a "benefit", "inducement", and "token" (185.33).[23] In sermonizing on Easter, Augustine rendered the "Devil" synonymously with the "Enemy" (224. 2). For the feast of Pentecost, "members" of the Church are synonymous with "sprouts of unity" and "sons of peace" (271). Augustine used periphrasis typically in identifying the incarnated Christ "as one of the offspring of David" (186. 3). Baptized Christians are amply identified as "reborn in Christ Jesus" (224. 1). The solemn liturgy of Pentecost is elaborated as a "solemn congregation, solemn reading, and solemn sermon" (269. 1). A thorough catalogue of Augustine's popular homiletic style cites his "extensive" use of metonymy and other redundant devices in 530 places,[24] and cites his "generous" use of periphrasis and other means of circumlocution in 2493 places.[25]

Augustine insisted on the ideal exegete's mastery of metaphor and allegory (Doct. Christ. 3. 29). Although "no analogy drawn from visible things to illustrate an invisible reality can be made to fit perfectly" (Lib. Arb. 2. 11. 32), Augustine believed that carefully planned figures could indicate the "abstract pattern of philosophical significance beneath the symbolic configuration."[26] Simultaneously explaining and illustrating the function of figurative diction, Augustine observed: "But eating and learning are similar in certain ways--the very food without which it is impossible to survive must be flavored because of people's taste" (Doct. Christ. 4. 11).[27] Augustine presumed that preachers would study allegorical form to solve the "gigantic puzzle" of revealed truths.[28] As an added exigency, a surprising number of potential converts were highly educated in rhetoric and often required

"the unraveling of some allegory" to supplement plainer and less stimulating treatments of doctrine (Doct. Christ. 9. 13).

Augustine's metaphorical treatment of Christ-made-man as "the Bread", "the Fountain", and several additional images pushed merely literal diction into a drab background (191. 1). The figurative assessment of the "Spirit of God" as "drink and light" underscored Augustine's metaphorical vision of Easter (225. 4). Augustine delivered a figurative view of the Pentecostal event by assigning the roles of eyes ears, tongue, hands, and feet to the "members" of the Church (268. 2). Augustine's allegory of the Nativity, in which "Truth" rouses man from his slumber and saves him from being lost (189. 2), the allegorical treatment of the Christian who puts off his personal reform as the "crow" which never returned to Noah's ark (224. 4), and the depiction of the original Apostles as "the new wineskins" into which the Spirit poured new wine on Pentecost (267. 1) tactically blended instruction with entertainment. The full catalogue of Augustine's popular preaching cites a "liberal" use of 1243 metaphors and allegories.[29]

Composition

The classical critics prescribed composition which produced a seemingly spontaneously shuffled flow of words through the use of schemes such as hyperbaton and parenthesis. The use of hyperbaton (an inverted order of words) and parenthesis (an interruption of sentence order with explanatory remarks) added authenticity to one's expression by simulating the sincere, impassioned orator's typical disregard for correct grammatical sequence. The critics seemed willing to sanction a possibly torturous style for the theoretically elegant effect of inverted sequences.

Augustine's regard for inverted grammatical devices complemented his concept of how man discovered knowledge. Augustine analyzed "the act of discovery" philologically and determined that concepts which the human mind grasps spontaneously are

merely known, not discovered: "The reason is, because we do not set out in search of them in order to come into them" (Trin. 10. 7. 10). True discovery and subsequent true expression "is something of our own mind which we cast this way and that by a kind of revolving motion, according as we think now of this and now of that" (Trin. 15. 15. 25). The ancients considered schemes of inversion and interruption to be genuine and natural devices: Augustine explained that the listener "is not oppressed with slavery" to the preacher's artifice as long as the figurative style was sufficiently obvious (Doct. Christ. 3. 9).

Augustine delivered an animated, typically inverted exhortation on the Nativity: "What human reason does not grasp faith lays hold on; and where human reason fails faith succeeds" (190. 2). The hyperbaton comparing newly baptized and matured Christians--"In them has been effected for the first time what ought to be strengthened in you" (228. 1)--exemplifies stylistic "shuffling". Augustine described the miracle of Pentecost, when "in the tongues of all men one man was speaking" (268. 1), with equal elegance. The occurences of hyperbaton throughout Augustine's popular preaching are "so numerous" as to indicate a stylistic norm rather than an exception.[30] Augustine's parenthetical command to rejoice on Christmas, "because, not the visible sun, but the invisible Creator of the sun has consecrated this day on which the Virgin, a true but inviolate mother" bore the e Saviour (186. 1), effected a rather limber cadence. The question, "How is so great a God, God with God, the Word of God through whom all things were made, how is He shut up in a womb" (225. 2), overflows with parentheses. Augustine used parenthetical style to explain God's motive ("because He wished it then to be a sign of His presence") (269. 1) in empowering the Apostles to speak in tongues on Pentecost. Far from being an isolated tactic, "177 instances of parentheses constitute a fairly large stylistic element in the sermons."

Brevity

The classical critics' directions on brevity seemed to counter the basically Peripatetic search for a "mean" in rhetoric. The critics agreed that obscurity could be derived from either slightly too much expression or too little, that is, whatever length of discourse would oppose regularity or sheer adequacy. The classical consensus suggested that a rhetor might mollify his argument or generally modify his message by saying a bit more or less than absolutely necessary.

Analyzing Augustine's practical alliance with the classical consensus on obscurantist brevity remains difficult because of the subjectivity involved. However, as the ancients agreed that obscurantism could be generated from slightly too much terseness or prolixity, so Augustine recommended that catechumens be instructed both "briefly and impressively" in the faith (Catech. Rud. 5. 9). The conjunction of concise and impressive rhetoric in Augustine's recommendation indicates his concern that an undue emphasis on brevity, without recognizing the length inherent to amplification, would hamper the preacher's efforts. Perhaps Augustine's prayer for personal deliverance from a "multitude of words" (Trin. 15. 28. 51) should be interpreted as rather affected, especially considering his exhortation on points of doctrine elsewhere: "[T]he more often we repeat and discuss them, then, of course, the knowledge of them will become familiar to us" (Trin. 3. preface). The many examples of metonymy, periphrasis, and other circumlocutions in Augustine's sermons seem counterbalanced by equally frequent instances of economical metaphors and brief, explanatory parentheses. Although his contemporaries apparently desired consistently longer sermons from the Bishop of Hippo than he was accustomed to deliver,[32] Augustine's sense of length was evidently influenced by the same rational design [illegible]uational constraints which dictated his choices in diction and composition.

Conclusion

Scholars generally agree on Augustine's "thousand years" of intellectual influence.[33] Murphy traces the medieval debt to Augustine in ninth through fourteenth-century treatises on the art of preaching.[34] Outler remarks that Augustine "has played a major role in every intellectual renaissance in the West since the time of Charlemagne."[35] Arnold summarizes Augustine's influence by stating that "the standards of speech which Cicero set in oratory and which Augustine set in Latin preaching were the rhetorical models of Europe for a thousand years after their own time."[36] Disagreement continues, however, about Augustine's role in the early Christian debate over the uses of pagan rhetorical theory. Recent essays by Leff and Timmis refer to the basic issue of whether Augustine's rhetoric implied a rejection of Second Sophistic tendencies[37] --as Sullivan and Baldwin have suggested[38] --or whether Augustine's theoretical and practical preferences indicated his approval of a Christian classicism--as both Murphy and Outler suggest.[39]

The congruence of classical perspectives on obscurantism and Augustine's theory and practice of preaching suggests one specific basis for accepting a "compromised" Christian classicism. Ameringer's study of Saint John Chrysostom's preaching posits "a compromise between Hellenism and Christianity" in early homiletics;[40] Campbell's analysis of Saint Basil's style reinforces the concept of a Christian compromise with classical rhetoric in the East.[41] As Ellspermann concludes: "Not only was rhetoric a help in overcoming objections to the faith, but it was a positive aid in making the truth more attractive."[42] A specific analysis of the obscurantist design in Saint Augustine's rhetoric leads to the conclusion that Augustine's personal "compromise" can be interpreted partially from his explicit debt to particular developments in classical grammar. Following the

recommendation for such a critical perspective by Marrou,[43] this essay concludes that grammatical artifacts accurately identify Augustine's vital rhetorical concerns. The consciously articulated, frequently applied obscurantism in his rhetoric identifies Augustine's concern for a tactical union of orthodox religious invention with classical elocution. The union anticipated problems in adapting "glad tidings" to diverse audiences which included partisans, students, and critics of Christianity.

ENDNOTES

[1]Henri-Irénée Marrou, Saint Augustin et la Fin de la Culture Antique, Bibliothèque des Écoles Francaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 145 (Paris: Ministère de l'Education Nationale, 1938), pp. 484-85.

[2]See John H. Patton, "Wisdom and Eloquence: The Alliance of Exegesis and Rhetoric in Augustine," Central States Speech Journal, 28 (1977), 96-105, especially the author's citations of R.A. Markus (ed.), Augustine: A Collection of Critical Essays (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1972).

[3]Peter Brown, The World of Late Antiquity - A.D. 150-750 (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1971), p. 74.

[4]Peter Brown, Augustine of Hippo (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), p. 245.

[5]James J. Murphy, "Saint Augustine and the Debate about a Christian Rhetoric," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 46 (1960), 403.

[6]W. Den Boer, "A Pagan Historian and His Enemies: Porphyry Against the Christians," Classical Philology, 69 (1974), 198.

[7]Albert C. Outler, "Augustine and the Transvaluation of the Classical Tradition," Classical Journal, 54 (1959), 214.

[8]Augustine professed an inability to read the Greek language competently. The Bishop of Hippo's self-professed limitations might be interpreted as either accurate or overly humble, but did not mandate a naive apprehension of the combined Greek and Roman standards which held sway over rhetorical education at the time.

[9]See the derivation of theoretical perspectives on obscurantism in William E. Wiethoff, "Obscurantism in Ancient Hellenistic Rhetoric," Central States Speech Journal, 30 (1979), 212-13.

[10]The Teacher, trans. Robert P. Russell, The Fathers of the Church, 59 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1968), subsequently cited within this essay as Mag. .

[11]The Free Choice of the Will, trans. Robert P. Russell, The Fathers of the Church, 59 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1968), subsequently cited within this essay as Lib. Arb. .

[12]On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed, trans. S.D.F. Salmond, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, 3 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1956), subsequently cited within this essay as Catech. Rud. .

[13]The Trinity, trans. Stephen McKenna, The Fathers of the Church, 45 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1963), subsequently cited within this essay as Trin. .

[14]On Christian Doctrine, trans. Durant W. Robertson, Jr., Library of Liberal Arts, 80 (N.Y.: The Liberal Arts Press, 1958), subsequently cited within this essay as Doct. Christ. .

[15]Brown, Augustine of Hippo, p. 252.

[16]Brown, Augustine of Hippo, p. 247.

[17]Brown, Augustine of Hippo, p. 251.

[18]Brown, Augustine of Hippo, p. 254.

[19]See the introduction to Saint Augustine, Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons, trans. Sister Mary Sarah Muldowney, The Fathers of the Church, 38 (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1959), pp. xv-xvi.

[20]See the introduction to Saint Augustine, Sermons for Christmas and Epiphany, trans. Thomas C. Lawler, Ancient Christian Writers, 15 (Westminister, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1952), p. 5.

[21]See the full outline of the critics' directions on diction, composition, and brevity in Wiethoff, 213-15.

[22]Brown, Augustine of Hippo, p. 259.

[23]Translations of excerpts from Saint Augustine's sermons are based on the 1683 Benedictine edition, as reprinted in S. Aureli Augustini Sermones, ed. J.P. Migne, Patrologiae Cursus Completus - Series Latina, 38 (Paris, 1841). I have also consulted Muldowney's translations of the Christmas and Easter sermons.

[24]Sister M. Inviolata Barry, St. Augustine the Orator--A Study of the Rhetorical Qualities of St. Augustine's Sermones ad Populum. The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies, 6 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1924), p. 30.

[25]Barry, p. 30.

[26]Robertson, p. xv.

[27]Augustine appears to have echoed a metaphor used similarly by John Chrysostom in sermonizing "On the Obscurity of the Prophecies": "When we have the care of the sick, we must not set before them a meal prepared at random, but a variety of dishes, so that the patient may choose what suits his taste." See Thomas E. Ameringer, The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic on the Panegyrical Sermons of St. John Chrysostom, The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies, 5 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1[illegible]1), p. 28.

[28]Brown, Augustine of Hippo, p. 253.

[29]Barry, p. 223.

[30]Barry, p. 162.

[31]Barry, p. 125.

[32]See the comparison of the mere fifteen minutes which Augustine "often" used with the two hours customarily used by John Chrysostom, in Lawler, p. 15.

[33]See Robertson, p. x.

[34]James J. Murphy, Rhetoric in the Middle Ages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 47.

[35]Outler, p. 214.

[36]Carroll C. Arnold, Criticism of Oral Rhetoric (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing, 1974), p. 2.

[37]Michael C. Leff, "Saint Augustine and Martianus Capella: Continuity and Change in Fifth-Century Latin Rhetorical Theory," Communication Quarterly, 24 (1976), 4; John H. Timmis, III, "Christian Rhetoric and the Western Church Fathers," Central States Speech Journal, 27 (1976), 281.

[38]The view that Augustine promoted a break with showy declamation and a return to Cicero's doctrina sana is prominent in Sister Therese Sullivan, S. Aureli Augustini Hipponiensis Episcopi de Doctrina Christiana Liber Quartus: A Commentary with a Revised Text, Introduction, and Translation, The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies, 23 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1930), p. 8. The view that Augustine's work "begins rhetoric anew" is found in Charles Sears Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1928), p. 51.

[39]See Murphy, "Saint Augustine and the Debate about a Christian Rhetoric," 403-4; also see Albert C. Outler's commentary on Augustine. Confessions and Enchiridion, Library of Christian Classics, 7 (Philadelphia: The Westminister Press, 1955), p. 13.

[40]Ameringer, p. 20.

[41]James M. Campbell, The Influence of the Second Sophistic on the Style of the Sermons of Saint Basil the Great, The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies, 2 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1922), passim.

[42]Gerard L. Ellspermann, The Attitude of the Early Christian Latin Writers toward Pagan Literature and Learning, The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies, 82 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1949), p. 254.

[43]See Marrou, pp. 480-81.